Claims

We claim:

1   1. A method for storing, organizing and providing remote electronic access to contracts,

2   the method comprising:

3   developing and storing a cover sheet including a standard set of identification data

4   characterizing each contract;

5   creating and storing a digital version of each contract by scanning each contract, each

6   digital version comprising a scanned image and a searchable text file, wherein the text is overlaid

7   with the image;

8   generating an index of bookmarks identifying sections of the digital version of each

9   contract;

10   capturing selected fields of information from the digital version of the contract, the

11   selected fields being selected from a group comprising vendor, contract date, contract expiration

12   date;

13   organizing and cross-referencing the contracts in a database comprising the captured

14   information and additional information related to each contract, the information in the database

15   being selected from a group comprising reference number, contracting party, vendor, contract

16   date, contract expiration date, department, contract type, contracting site, responsible party,

17   parties authorized to have remote electronic access to the document, contract signatory,

18   contracting group, contract value, contract status, contract critical dates, and assets related to

19   contract;

20   alerting designated parties of critical dates associated with each contract; and

21   providing remote electronic access to the contracts over the internet.

1   2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   assigning each contract a reference number.

1   3. The method according to claim 1, wherein storing the cover sheet comprises:

2   generating a cover sheet comprising a plurality of fields each comprising a plurality of

3   members;

4   selecting at least one member of each field on the cover sheet; and

5   scanning the cover sheet.

1   4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the identification data on the cover sheet is

2   selected from a group comprising contracting entity, contract related site, contract type, contract

3   related department, authorized users and responsible parties.

1   5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   linking information to the contract, the information selected from the group comprising

3   vendor information, notes concerning the contracts, related documents, party information, user

4   selected critical dates, assets related to the contracts, and selected terms of the contracts.

1   6. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   limiting access and extent of access of users to the contracts and related information.

3

4   7. The method according to claim 6, wherein the access and extent of access are defined

5   by amount of information that a user may access; ability to print contracts and information;

6   ability to attach and edit information attached to a contract record; ability to create and edit a

7   contract summary page; the ability to archive a contract, the ability to enter and edit critical

8   dates; the ability to enter and edit assets attached to a contract, the ability to create and enter

9   vendor information; the ability to be named as a responsible party to a contract; the ability to

10   delete a vendor, the ability to create, edit or delete users; and the ability to make global changes

11   to summary pages of a database of the party to the contracts.

1   8. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   searching the contracts

1   9. The method according to claim 1, wherein providing remote access to the contracts

2   comprises:

3   displaying a contract attribute search page comprising lists of alternatives for each

4   member of the standard set of identification data;

5   selecting at least one alternative for each member of the standard set of identification

6   data; and

7   initiating the search.

1   10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the lists are displayed as pull down

2   menus.

1 11. The method according to claim 1, wherein providing remote access to the contracts

2 comprises:

3   displaying a contract search page comprising a contract text keyword search text entry

4 box;

5   entering text in the text entry box; and

6   initiating the search.

1 12. The method according to claim 1, wherein providing remote access to the contracts

2 comprises:

3   displaying a contract filter page including a contract attribute search page comprising lists

4 alternatives for each member of the standard set of identification data and including a contract

5 search page comprising a contract text keyword search text entry box;

6   selecting at least one alternative for each member of the standard set of identification data

7 and/or entering text in the text entry box; and

8   initiating the search.

1 13. The method according to claim 1, wherein providing remote access to the contracts

2 comprises:

3   displaying a list of categories of contract information;

4   selecting a category; and

5   displaying contracts that fall within the selected category.

1   14. The method according to claim 13, further comprising:

2   selecting one of the displayed contracts; and

3   displaying information about the selected contract.

1   15. The method according to claim 13, wherein the categories of contract information are

2   selected from the group comprising contract number, contract type, contract signatory, other

3   signatory, responsible party, contract vendor, contracting entity, contracting department, contract

4   site, contracting group, contract note original date, contract expiration date, expiration of

5   contracts for a specified user, automatically renewing contracts, critical date, contract status, or

6   other contracting party, wherein all contracts having the same value of the selected category are

7   displayed.

1   16. The method according to claim 13, wherein the displayed information comprises a

2   contract page comprising cover sheet including information from the database of information

3   concerning the contract, the cover sheet including links to other information in the contract

4   database.

1   17. The method according to claim 16, wherein the contract page comprises regions

2   displaying a set of fixed contract summary information and a changeable set of information, and

3   user actionable regions for changing the changeable information.

1   18. The method according to claim 17, wherein details regarding information on the

2   contract page may be accessed through active links on the contract page, wherein the active links

3   comprise the information of which details are sought.

1   19. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   predefining a level of access of a user;

3   verifying a name and a password for the user; and

4   permitting the user to access the contracts with the level of access of the user.

1   20. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   providing all of information about a contract on a single printable page.

1   21. The method according to claim 18, wherein one of the links is to the digital version

2   of the contract.

1   22. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   generating a new contract record utilizing a stored contract record as a template.

1   23. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   providing remote electronic access over the internet to contracts being negotiated;

3   entry of comments concerning the contracts by users; and

4   providing remote electronic access over the internet to contracts commented on by the

5   users.

1   24. A method for storing, organizing and providing remote electronic access to

2   documents, the method comprising:

3   assigning each document a reference number;

4   developing and storing a cover sheet including a standard set of identification data

5   characterizing each document;

6   creating and storing a digital version of each contract by scanning each document, each

7   digital version comprising a scanned image and searchable a text file, wherein the text is overlaid

8   with the image;

9   generating an index of bookmarks identifying sections of the digital version of each

10   document;

11   capturing selected fields of information from the digital version of the document;

12   organizing and cross-referencing the documents in a database comprising the captured

13   information and additional information related to each document;

14   generating alerts to designated parties of critical dates associated with each document;

15   and

16   providing remote electronic access to the document over the internet.

1   25. The method according to claim 24, wherein the documents are selected from the

2   group comprising contracts, policies, procedures, warranties, correspondence, contract addenda,

3   and credentialing information.

1   26. A computer program product for performing a process of storing, organizing and

2   providing remote electronic access to documents, comprising:

3   a computer readable medium; and

4   computer program instructions, recorded on the computer readable medium, executable

5   by a processor, for performing the steps of:

6   assigning each document a reference number;

7   developing and storing a cover sheet including a standard set of identification data

8   characterizing each document;

9   creating and storing a digital version of each contract by scanning each document, each

10   digital version comprising a scanned image and searchable a text file, wherein the text is overlaid

11   with the image;

12   generating an index of bookmarks identifying sections of the digital version of each

13   document;

14   capturing selected fields of information from the digital version of the document;

15   organizing and cross-referencing the documents in a database comprising the captured

16   information and additional information related to each document;

17   generating alerts to designated parties of critical dates associated with each document;

18   and

19   providing remote electronic access to the document over the internet.

1   27. A system for performing a process of for storing, organizing and providing remote

2 - electronic access to documents, comprising:

3   a processor operable to execute computer program instructions; and

4   a memory operable to store computer program instructions executable by the processor,

5   for performing the steps of:

6   assigning each document a reference number;

7 developing and storing a cover sheet including a standard set of identification data

8 characterizing each document;

9 creating and storing a digital version of each contract by scanning each document, each

10 digital version comprising a scanned image and searchable a text file, wherein the text is overlaid

11 with the image;

12 generating an index of bookmarks identifying sections of the digital version of each

13 document;

14 capturing selected fields of information from the digital version of the document;

15 organizing and cross-referencing the documents in a database comprising the captured

16 information and additional information related to each document;

17 generating alerts to designated parties of critical dates associated with each document;

18 and

19 providing remote electronic access to the document over the internet.